United Nations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

General Assembly

Official Records • Fiftieth Session
Supplement No.34 (A/50/34)

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United Nations • New York, 1995

NOTE

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ISSN 0255-1969

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FOREWORD

The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) was created on an experimental basis under General Assembly resolution 2150 (XXI) of 4 November 1966. On 1 January 1978, the statute of the Unit, as adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976, took effect. By this action, the Unit became a subsidiary organ of the legislative bodies of the organizations within the United Nations system which have accepted the statute of the Unit. Those organizations, hereinafter referred to as the participating organizations, are listed in chapter II of the present report. The main purpose of the Unit is to enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations system.

According to its statute, the Unit shall, inter alia, satisfy itself that the activities undertaken by the participating organizations are carried out in the most economical manner and that optimum use is made of resources available for carrying out their activities. The Unit is composed of 11 Inspectors having experience in national or international administrative and financial matters, including management questions, and are appointed by the General Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. They serve in their personal capacity for a term of five years, renewable once.

Inspectors have the broadest powers of investigation in all matters having a bearing on the efficiency of services and proper use of resources and may make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations. They are also mandated to inspect and evaluate the activities of the participating organizations and make recommendations aimed at improving management and methods and at achieving greater coordination among those organizations.

At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly, in the preamble of resolution 48/221 of 23 December 1993, reaffirmed the statute of the Unit, as the only independent system-wide inspection, evaluation and investigation body.

The Unit prepares reports, notes and confidential letters addressed to one or more organizations and/or of interest to the United Nations system as a whole. In addition, the Unit submits an annual report, covering its main activities during the year, to the General Assembly and to the legislative organs of the participating organizations.

The present report is the twenty-seventh of its kind prepared by the Unit since its establishment.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report gives an account of the activities carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) during the period from 1 July 1994 to 30 June 1995.

2. The quality of JIU work depends on several factors, including the performance of members and staff of the Unit, the guidance and support received from legislative bodies and Member States, and the cooperation of other external oversight bodies as well as that of the secretariats of the participating organizations.

3. The overall performance and impact of the Unit could be further enhanced if the individual Member States that propose candidates and the General Assembly could take the necessary action to ensure that the selection of Inspectors is governed by the qualifications and experience stipulated in article 2, paragraph 1, of the JIU statute. It would also seem advisable for the legislative bodies of the participating organizations to devote the necessary attention to, and take action on, the reports and recommendations of the Unit, instead of simply taking note of them or thanking the Inspectors, which has been the prevailing practice to date. The secretariats of the participating organizations should ascertain the implementation and follow-up of the recommendations of the Unit as approved by their legislative organs.

4. Furthermore, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in complying with article 17 of the JIU statute, should provide the facilities and administrative support required by the Unit. Chapter VI of the present report contains the recommendations of the Unit for enhancing its role, functions and productivity.

II. PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

5. The following organizations have accepted the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit:

United Nations and its affiliated bodies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

III. COMPOSITION OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

6. The composition of the Joint Inspection Unit as at 30 June 1995 was as follows:

Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha (Algeria),** Chairman

Mr. Homero L. Hernandez-Sanchez (Dominican Republic),** Vice-Chairman

Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski (Poland)*****

Mrs. Erica-Irene Daes (Greece)*

Mr. Richard Hennes (United States of America)*

Mr. Tunsala Kabongo (Zaire)*

Mr. Boris P. Krasulin (Russian Federation)**

Mr. Sumihiro Kuyama (Japan)****

Mr. Francesco Mezzalama (Italy)**

Mr. Khalil I. Othman (Jordan)**

Mr. Raúl Quijano (Argentina)***

7. In accordance with article 18 of its statute, the Unit elected Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha as Chairman and Mr. Homero L. Hernandez-Sanchez, Vice-Chairman for 1995. During 1994, Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski and Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha were, respectively, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Unit.

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* Term of office expires on 31 December 1995.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 1997.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 1998.

**** Term of office expires on 31 December 1999.

***** Term of office expires on 31 December 2000.

IV. SECRETARIAT

8. The Joint Inspection Unit has a small secretariat, consisting of an Executive Secretary, 7 research officers, 2 research assistants at the principal General Service level and 8 other General Service staff. Despite the increase in workload over the years, the JIU secretariat manning table has decreased from 21 at its inception to 18 at present. Moreover, turnover in research officer posts has further constrained the output of the Unit. In November 1994, a new Executive Secretary was appointed upon the retirement of the former Executive Secretary.

9. The JIU has stressed the need for additional research staff. In its resolution 43/221 of 21 December 1988 the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and in consultation with the Joint Inspection Unit, to ensure the maintenance of an efficient and effective research capability within the secretariat of the Unit. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 45/237 of 21 December 1990, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, the research and analytical capacity of the secretariat of the Joint Inspection Unit in order to enhance its performance, with due respect for the statute of the Unit.

10. In its report to the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly 1/ the Unit requested two additional Professional posts. In its decision 46/446 of 20 December 1991, the General Assembly decided that those proposals had to be examined by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). In responding to that decision, the ACABQ, in its report on the functioning of JIU, expressed the following opinion: "The Advisory Committee is of the view that an increase in resources should not be entertained at the present time; it would consider an increase in computer resources in the context of the proposed programme budget, taking account of the contribution computers may make as a way of improving productivity" (see A/47/755, para. 42).

11. In their report to the General Assembly's forty-eighth session, 2/ the Inspectors stated that they would refrain from reiterating the requests to strengthen the staffing capacities made in previous reports in consideration of the existing financial constraints. They observed, however, that the proposals remained valid and hoped that they could be met at a more favourable juncture. Thus, in its resolution 48/221 of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly, inter alia, recognized the need to give adequate means to the JIU in order to enable it to carry out its functions and requested the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the participating organizations, without prejudice to article 20 of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, to consider providing the Unit with extrabudgetary resources and programme support funds for specific activities of inspection, evaluation and investigation in those areas which were linked to those resources.

12. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, the Unit opted for a more modest request than for the previous biennium by proposing to upgrade one P-5 post to D-1 and to obtain one additional P-4 post to be financed, if feasible, through the support account of peace-keeping operations, taking into account, inter alia, that in resolution 48/221, the General Assembly requested the Unit to study and to report to it on means by which the Unit could enhance its inspection and evaluation of specific activities such as peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance.

13. Since out of the 12 reports the Unit is currently carrying out, 4 (one third) deal with peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance, the Unit has only two options open to it to meet the General Assembly requirements, namely, either to request additional staff resources or to redeploy resources from other areas of interest, such as administration and management and development and technical cooperation. In this respect, the Joint Inspection Unit wishes to emphasize that in its report of the eighty-second session held in London in February 1995, the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) stated that organizations which were not involved in peace-keeping activities questioned the extent of the use of the Unit's resources, which were jointly financed, for those types of studies, in particular given the fact that the cost-sharing formula excluded expenditure on peace-keeping.

14. Although articles 17 and 20 of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit are clear in defining the procedure for the consideration of the budget of the Unit and although the Unit was willing to provide any clarification, those proposals were not included in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the 1996-1997 biennium, and no reason was given to the Unit for the omission. The United Nations Secretariat proposals for the JIU budget show a real negative growth of 0.27 per cent.

15. In complying with article 20, paragraph 1, of its statute, the Unit was invited to present its budget estimates to the ACABQ. All the facts included in the present report were explained in detail to the ACABQ, which, in turn, expressed its position in its report to the General Assembly on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. 3/

16. In that report, the ACABQ, inter alia, expressed its belief that the Secretary-General's budget proposal for JIU for 1996-1997 should be considered in the light of the requirements of General Assembly resolution 48/221, with regard to the Unit's programme of work, as well as the need to strengthen the external oversight control mechanisms, as emphasized by the Assembly in its resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994. The ACABQ further recalled, in particular, paragraph 12 of resolution 48/221 and recommended that the Secretary General report on the steps taken and arrangements made for providing the Unit with extrabudgetary resources and programme support for specific activities of inspection, evaluation and investigation in those areas linked to those resources. The action and guidance of the General Assembly in this regard would be extremely useful to the JIU.

V. WORK PROGRAMME

17. The Unit has established its work programme for 1995 and a preliminary work programme for 1996 and beyond (see annex II and A/50/140). As explained in document A/50/140, the list is tentative and does not necessarily imply that the JIU will undertake all the studies. Work programmes are flexible enough to allow the addition of priority issues that may emerge.

18. In drawing up the work programme, the Unit has been guided by a fundamental objective, namely, to continue the trend of good performance and improve the quality and relevance of its output. The Inspectors were aware that a well-balanced, flexible and realistic work programme was a key element for that purpose. The work programme for 1995, then, constituted an important step for further shaping an action-oriented strategy for the Unit's activities.

19. All efforts were made to comply with the provisions of the statute of the JIU, in particular articles 5 and 9; the relevant resolutions of the legislative organs of the participating organizations, especially General Assembly resolutions 47/201 of 22 December 1992 and 48/221 (paras. 3, 4 and 13); and the internal guidelines and procedures of the Unit.

20. In establishing its work programme, under article 9, paragraph 1, of its statute, the Unit strived as much as possible to satisfy the concerns expressed by the legislative bodies of the participating organizations and their secretariats and internal and external oversight bodies. Indeed, the secretariats have been active in making suggestions for the Unit's work programmes, unlike the legislative bodies and several external oversight organs. Other external oversight bodies have also been requested to be more active in commenting on JIU work programmes. Those bodies are an indispensable source of ideas on issues to be taken up by the JIU.

21. None the less, the Unit endeavoured to include in its work programme important priority items falling within its competence and aimed at making a substantial contribution to the solution of concrete problems by providing practical and action-oriented recommendations.

22. Efforts were made to coordinate the JIU work programme with those of other external oversight bodies. Consideration was also given to the need to achieve a better mix of evaluation, investigation and inspection in line with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

23. The current JIU annual report cycle is July-June, while the JIU work programme previously covered the calendar year. Since most legislative organs of participating organizations meet between the summer and autumn seasons, there was a lack of synchronization between the calendars of meetings of participating organizations and the JIU work programme. To avoid this discrepancy, the Unit has decided to shift its work programme cycle from January-December to July-June. The main purpose of this decision was to spread the reviews contained in the work programme throughout the new cycle and thus even out the workload to the extent possible in order to ensure the timely presentation of JIU reports to the pertinent legislative organs, especially the General Assembly. Consequently, the 1995-1996 work programme should be considered transitional and will overlap somewhat with the 1995 work programme.

24. The work programme also attempts to concentrate the Unit's efforts in areas of importance and relevance to the United Nations system, having a bearing on

the efficiency of services; on optimal management methods; on attaining common or comparable standards and on achieving greater coordination among participating organizations.

25. Of the total, five topics concern the United Nations, seven are system-wide and two are of concern to several organizations. With respect to field of activity, eight are devoted to administration and management, two fall under development cooperation, two under peace-keeping operations or related matters and two under humanitarian assistance.

26. Since the description and analysis of its work programme appear in document A/50/140, they are not included in the present report, and the Unit considers it timely to discontinue the practice of repeating the description and analysis of its work programmes in future annual reports.

27. In its resolution 45/237 of 21 December 1990, the General Assembly requested the JIU to include in its annual report a summary of its reports and recommendations. The JIU has been doing so over the years. In its view, experience has proved this exercise to be an unnecessary repetition of JIU recommendations that have been previously approved by pertinent legislative bodies, including the General Assembly. If the General Assembly does not object, the Unit considers it timely to discontinue this practice and instead to concentrate its efforts on the actual follow-up and implementation of the JIU recommendations approved by the legislative organs.

VI. MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE UNIT

28. The improvement of any activity is a continuous process. The General Assembly has adopted several resolutions encouraging the JIU to improve its performance, effectiveness and efficiency. The Unit has in turn remained attentive to all comments and recommendations concerning its performance, has responded positively to them and continues to make efforts in this regard.

29. The impact of the work of the Unit should not only be regarded in terms of its reports and recommendations. The interactions of Inspectors with the various heads of participating organizations and other United Nations system officials during the course of inspections, investigations and evaluations have proved to be a key advisory tool for encouraging those heads and officials to take concrete steps for solving specific difficulties faced by the various services of the United Nations system. Those heads and officials have benefited from the broad system-wide experience of the Inspectors and in many cases have anticipated suggestions and recommendations which later appear in the Unit's reports. This intangible role of the JIU should always be kept in mind when the Unit's performance is being assessed.

30. The JIU has, on several occasions, submitted to the General Assembly proposals to improve its work, some of which are contained in its reports for 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994. In its 1994 report, 4/ the Unit recapitulated the actions taken to implement a number of recommendations which had been addressed to it, in particular those contained in General Assembly resolution 48/221.

31. The Unit also presented its views on measures to improve the effectiveness and possible strengthening of the external oversight mechanisms, as requested by the General Assembly in its decision 47/454, paragraph (b), of 23 December 1992, and reaffirmed in its decision 48/493 A of 29 July 1994.

32. Furthermore, the General Assembly has regularly reaffirmed the statute of the Unit. Resolutions 48/218 and 48/221 are of particular relevance in this respect. In section II, paragraph 6, of resolution 48/218 A of 23 December 1993, the Assembly emphasized the need to ensure respect for the separate and distinct roles and functions of external and internal oversight mechanisms and also to strengthen the external oversight control mechanisms. In its resolution 48/221, the Assembly reaffirmed the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit as the only independent system-wide inspection, evaluation and investigation body.

33. Without wishing to repeat its previous proposals, the Unit considers it necessary to call to the attention of the General Assembly the actions it has taken and the recommendations it has made over the years to improve its performance, as described, in particular, in its 1993 report. It is hoped that such a review of internal improvement initiatives would contribute to the ongoing debate in the Assembly's Fifth Committee on ways and means of strengthening the external oversight bodies.

34. The Unit established a working group to develop a set of internal standards and guidelines for inspection, evaluation and investigation. The Unit is engaged in refining those important tools for its work, as envisaged in article 8 of its statute.

35. The Unit is gradually developing a solid internal technological information system that will be the core element of an information and documentation centre

which it plans to establish soon and which should help to improve the Unit's productivity in issuing reports and recommendations. The Unit wishes to recall its request for additional computer workstations included in its 1991 report. 1/

36. Subsequently, in paragraph 42 of its report on the functioning of the JIU, as cited in paragraph 10 above, the ACABQ indicated that "it would consider an increase in computer resources in the context of the proposed programme budget, taking account of the contribution computers may make as a way of improving productivity". Although this recommendation was approved by the General Assembly, corresponding provision was not included in the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995.

37. When the Unit was moved in 1993 from the Palais des Nations, where it was at least technically connected to the United Nations main library and technological information systems, to a building outside the Palais complex, it became disconnected from such systems. This and other inconveniences have constituted a setback in the Unit's performance.

38. After continuous efforts, most of the technical requirements are being met and the Unit will be able to set up its own technological information system, provided it receives the necessary resources for both the acquisition and the installation of the additional computer workstations that are needed.

39. The Unit expects to increase tangibly its research capacity when such a system is in place, particularly through having a more solid database; making more feasibility studies before choosing new items for inspection, investigation or evaluation; making a thorough analysis of the discussions, reports, resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and of the legislative organs of other participating organizations, as expressed in paragraph 28 of its 1994 report, 4/ and establishing a very accurate follow-up mechanism. The importance and the impact of such systems are described in paragraph 66 of the 1994 report.

40. In paragraph 5 of resolution 48/221, the General Assembly requested "the Joint Inspection Unit, when appropriate, to provide in its reports information on estimated financial implications or possible cost-savings resulting from implementation of the recommendations formulated therein". The Unit wishes to recall that in its report entitled "Analysis of cost savings from JIU reports, 1985-1992" (see A/48/606), it gave an account of the cost-savings resulting from its past recommendations. The Unit considers its useful for the General Assembly to take that report into account when discussing the Unit's performance.

41. In general, the Unit is increasingly exercising the collective wisdom approach in preparing its reports, as envisaged in article 11, paragraph 2, of its statute and consistent with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and its internal guidelines and procedures in developing its programmes of work.

42. None the less, along with its internal efforts and endeavours, the JIU also needs more engagement and support from the Member States and the participating organizations and other associated bodies. This requires analysing the JIU reports and drawing concrete conclusions from them.

43. Finally, the Unit wishes to add certain observations on issues of particular concern to it and to its constituencies. It is, of course, aware of certain proposals made and discussions under way among Member States and officials of the United Nations system.

44. The main issues relate to the strengthening of the Unit's secretariat, the selection of inspectors, the budgetary and administrative independence of the Unit, and the Unit's leadership.

45. First, as discussed in chapter IV, despite the General Assembly's recognition of the Unit's support staff needs, its requirements have not yet been met. The Unit remains of the opinion that its requests for strengthening its support staff continue to be in the interest of Member States in having a more effective oversight performance of the Unit.

46. Secondly, the Inspectors would like to reiterate their belief that the General Assembly should continue to pay special attention to the selection and appointment of inspectors, in accordance with the requisite qualifications stipulated under article 2, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Unit.

47. Thirdly, the very fact that, in accordance with article 20 of the statute, the Unit's budgetary proposals are assessed and decided upon by the Secretary-General of the United Nations after consultation, within the ACC, with the executive heads of the participating organizations, who are precisely the subjects of the Unit's inspection, investigation and evaluation responsibilities, poses an institutional dilemma for both the Unit and the Secretary-General and ACC. Although the General Assembly stipulated in article 7 of the Unit's statute that: "The Inspectors shall discharge their duties in full independence and in the sole interest of the organizations", the Unit's independence has been compromised in practical terms by existing interpretations of articles 17 and 20 of the statute. The General Assembly may wish to clarify this dilemma.

48. Fourthly, and within the context of article 18 of its statute, the Unit is studying ways of having more effective leadership roles by its Chairman and Vice-Chairman, including modifying the rotational practice.

VII. RELATIONS AND COOPERATION WITH THE PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS, EXTERNAL OVERSIGHT BODIES AND OTHER RELEVANT BODIES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

49. The Unit is fully aware of the importance of its relations with the participating organizations and with bodies bearing oversight responsibilities as a fundamental working tool aimed at exchanging information and views, improving the quality and accuracy of background information and avoiding overlapping and unnecessary duplication of effort.

A. Participating organizations

50. The Unit has continued to make efforts to strengthen its cooperation and coordination with both the legislative bodies and the secretariats of the participating organizations. In this regard, the Unit has regularly called upon legislative bodies to give greater attention to its reports and recommendations and to provide it with their comments, suggestions and instructions.

51. In accordance with article 6 of its statute, the Unit is empowered to make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations, some of which may be without prior notification, as and when the Inspectors themselves may decide, in any of the services of the organizations. However, the Unit has refrained from exercising that prerogative in order to allow the secretariats involved enough time and full opportunity to interact with the responsible Inspectors and the Unit and also to satisfy the essential requisite of transparency.

52. During the period of the present report, JIU members attended the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in particular the meetings of the Assembly's Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees, to introduce and discuss the Unit's reports.

53. It is useful to point out that the practice of presenting reports of concern to the Economic and Social Council was re-established. The Unit wishes to recognize the cooperation granted by the secretariat of the Council in this regard and is pleased to continue and reinforce this practice.

54. The Chairman attended the first part of the thirty-fourth session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), held in New York from 16 to 23 May 1994, at which JIU reports were considered.

55. The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and individual Inspectors attended meetings of legislative bodies of participating organizations where issues of concern to the JIU would be discussed. The following meetings, among others, were attended by Inspectors:

- twenty-sixth meeting of representatives of Internal Audit Services of United Nations Organizations and Multilateral Financial Institutions, 22-24 May 1995, New York;

- meeting of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), 1 and 2 June 1995, Geneva;

- thirtieth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, twenty-first meeting of the Conference of Ministers, 1-4 May 1995, Addis Ababa;

- eighty-second session of the General Conference, International Labour Organization, 6-23 June 1995, Geneva;

- forty-first session of the Trade and Development Board, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 20-31 March 1995, Geneva;

- substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, 26 June-28 July 1995, Geneva;

- fifty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights, 30 January-10 March 1995, Geneva;

- eighteenth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 22-25 May 1995, Beirut.

56. The exchange of views and contacts with the secretariats of participating organizations, especially with internal oversight units, have increased over the years. The Chairman, usually accompanied by the Executive Secretary, held meetings in Geneva with a number of heads of agencies and programmes. The discussions dealt with ways and means of improving the working relations with the respective secretariats, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/221.

57. In general, the executive heads concerned expressed appreciation for the work of the JIU and recognized its contribution to the internal administrative and management functioning of the respective organizations. The Unit welcomes constructive criticism supported by objective analysis of its reports.

58. The relations with the ACC and its subsidiary bodies continue to be constructive and pragmatic. The ACC has been attentive to JIU reports and is making efforts to produce joint comments on time in accordance with the JIU reporting procedure as envisaged in article 11 of its statute.

59. The ACC and its subsidiary bodies are aware of the importance of issuing their comments as expeditiously as possible. The JIU is committed to circulating its reports on time in order to allow the ACC to produce meaningful and timely comments.

B. Other external oversight bodies

60. The Unit has continued its working relations and practical cooperation with other external oversight bodies. A joint ACABQ-JIU meeting took place in Geneva in September 1994. It was an opportunity for a discussion of issues of common interest in order to maintain a close relationship between the two bodies, as recommended in paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 48/221 of 23 December 1993. On various occasions, the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and other members of the Unit met with their counterparts in the ACABQ. For example, the presentation by the Chairman of the JIU budget proposals became a good opportunity for the Unit to exchange views with the ACABQ.

61. In accordance with article 11, paragraph 4 (d) of the JIU statute, the ACABQ is entitled to issue comments and observations on any of the JIU's reports which fall within its competence. Furthermore, in accordance with article 9 of the statute, in preparing its work programme, the Unit shall take into account suggestions received from, among others, bodies of the United Nations system concerned with budgetary control, investigation, coordination and evaluation.

The Unit is aware of the heavy workload of the ACABQ but it hopes that the Committee will make an extra effort in this regard.

62. The working interactions with the CPC are also meaningful. The CPC has traditionally been interested in considering JIU reports and normally makes concrete comments, suggestions and recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. It has also been active in making suggestions for issues to be included in the JIU work programme. The JIU welcomes and commends this cooperation between the two external oversight bodies.

63. The close relationship between the JIU and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) should be highlighted. The ICSC has been active in providing comments on the JIU work programme. The JIU has benefited from the experience of the ICSC in its field of competence and intends to develop further this cooperation by more practical means. The Chairman and the Executive Secretary of the ICSC held a meeting with the Inspectors in Geneva. It was also an opportunity for a discussion of issues of common interest.

64. The JIU's relations with the Panel of External Auditors and the United Nations Board of Auditors further expanded during the reporting period both through exchange of documents and information and through consultations on common issues, including relations with the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

C. Office of Internal Oversight Services

65. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) was established by the General Assembly through its resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, in which the Assembly again emphasized the need to ensure respect for the separate and distinct roles of internal and external oversight mechanisms and to strengthen the external oversight mechanisms, and also reaffirmed the role of the JIU in accordance with its mandate.

66. As part of the reporting procedure of the OIOS, the role of the JIU in the area of oversight services was highlighted in paragraph 5, subparagraph (e) (iii) of resolution 48/218 B, which stated that: "The Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit shall be provided with copies of all final reports produced by the Office as well as the comments of the Secretary-General on them and shall provide the Assembly with their comments as appropriate".

67. The Unit welcomes this additional responsibility and has approached it seriously in its determination to satisfy Member States to whom it is accountable. It has done so despite the added strains on its resources which that responsibility has entailed.

68. Working relations between the JIU and the OIOS are excellent. Both units are aware of their separate and distinct roles, the former as the only external system-wide oversight body accountable to the Member States and the latter as the United Nations internal oversight body accountable to the Secretary-General.

69. The JIU is satisfied with the current operational relations between the two units and intends to improve, strengthen and refine them. In fact, several issues included in the work programme of the JIU have been suggested to it by the OIOS as an example of constructive cooperation.

70. The JIU wishes to reiterate the proposal contained in its 1994 report to the General Assembly 4/ that compliance with and follow-up of approved recommendations concerning the United Nations emanating from external oversight bodies should be included in the functions assigned to the OIOS. The General Assembly may wish to take action on that recommendation.

D. Other concerned organizations

71. The JIU, as a system-wide external oversight body with broad powers, has in the course of its work developed over the years relations with organizations and institutions outside of the United Nations system, including governmental institutions; regional organizations such as the European Union, the League of Arab States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization of American States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Latin American Economic System and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; non-governmental organizations, and research institutions. The JIU is currently taking steps aimed at increasing and further developing relations with specialized institutions like the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

VIII. RESULTS, FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A. General comments

72. Follow-up is an active concept and a continuous process that starts immediately after a JIU report is sent out for action (the so-called "blue cover report"). Indeed, this constitutes the most important phase and starting-point for testing the quality and the potential impact of the JIU recommendations.

73. The General Assembly has always been aware of this fact and very keen in stressing the need for the various secretariats of participating organizations and the JIU to develop practical procedures to ascertain compliance with the reporting and follow-up procedures.

74. In its resolution 32/199 of 21 December 1977, the General Assembly decided that the reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the JIU should provide concise information only with regard to those reports that have been indicated by the Unit to be of interest to the Assembly, one of its Main Committees or its other subsidiary organs. Since then, the Unit has been providing the Secretary-General with such indications.

75. In its decision 46/446 of 20 December 1991, the General Assembly requested the heads of participating organizations and the ACC to observe strictly the time-limit for commenting on JIU reports. In its resolution 44/184 of 19 December 1989, the Assembly invited the JIU to continue to make every possible effort to issue its reports well in advance of meetings of the legislative bodies of its participating organizations to ensure that the comments of the Secretary-General and those of the ACC, where pertinent, are issued in accordance with existing regulations for the timely receipt of documentation.

76. In its resolution 48/221, the General Assembly called upon the JIU to follow up on the implementation of its recommendations and to include the relevant information regularly in its annual reports.

77. Thus it can be seen that the timely presentation of JIU reports and the required comments by the Secretary-General and by individual heads of other participating organizations and/or the ACC, as appropriate, is a common endeavour between the JIU and those bodies.

78. The JIU is committed to meeting this target but sometimes it is difficult for the Unit to abide by the internal timetables for the completion of its reports. One major difficulty faced by the Unit in speeding up the preparation of its reports is obtaining from the various secretariats timely and required information.

79. At its twenty-fourth session, the CPC requested that it be authorized to examine the pertinent reports of the JIU even without the written comments of the Secretary-General if they were not available and added that those comments could be made orally. 5/ In its resolution 39/238 of 18 December 1984, the General Assembly approved the conclusions and other recommendations of the CPC. The General Assembly and other legislative bodies of the participating organizations may wish to decide to proceed in the same way.

80. In a new attempt to respond positively and efficiently to the invitation of the General Assembly, the Unit is taking concrete steps to achieve a punctual

and systematic follow-up of its reports and recommendations from an early stage until the full implementation of its recommendations as approved by the legislative organs of participating organizations. Among other measures, the Unit intends to request the concerned heads to provide it with a timetable for the implementation of approved JIU recommendations after they are approved by the concerned legislative bodies. The General Assembly and other legislative bodies of participating organizations may wish to support JIU in this effort.

B. Comments on the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the JIU recommendations

81. In conformity with the current practice described in paragraph 94 below, the Secretary-General issued a report on 4 November 1994 (A/49/632) on implementation of the recommendations contained in four JIU reports: African Institute for Economic Development and Planning; Assessment of the environmental focus of projects financed by the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies; Concluding report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system; and Grade overlap.

82. In its 1994 report, the Unit stated that it intended to provide its comments on the Secretary-General reports in an addendum, but taking into account that that report will be considered together with the present one, the Unit has decided to include its comments in the present report.

83. Since the comments of the Secretary-General on the four reports provide a detailed account of what is being done by the United Nations and by other participating organizations concerned, especially the United Nations Development Programme, in implementing the JIU recommendations as approved by the General Assembly and the Unit is satisfied with those accounts, it decided not to make a detailed analysis of each of them this time as has been the past practice.

C. Overall analysis of the results and follow-up of the JIU recommendations

84. For the past four years, the JIU has been particularly engaged in a process and dialogue designed to improve the substance and results of its work. The objective is to ensure that its limited resources are used to produce reports that make the maximum possible contribution to improving the programmes and performance of the United Nations system. This evolving process has been reflected in each of the most recent JIU annual reports.

(a) The 1991 report 1/ summarized actions being taken to enhance JIU work-programming, particularly through more active consultation with participating organizations and development of a more systematic and long-range programming strategy. It also responded to the General Assembly's request that JIU provide more detailed commentary in its annual reports on the implementation of its recommendations by the United Nations and other participating organizations.

(b) The 1992 report 6/ analysed the significantly different types of impact of JIU reports:

(i) the impact of JIU reports over a decade or longer in such major areas as programme planning and budgeting, development cooperation, conference services, evaluation and personnel matters;

(ii) significant implementation actions taken by organizations in relatively rapid response to some JIU recommendations, particularly in the evaluation, management, budgetary and administrative areas to which the General Assembly had requested that the Unit give greater attention;

(iii) deferred impact, where major JIU recommendations had eventually proven valid, but only after the organizations had moved very slowly to take the necessary corrective actions;

(iv) cost-savings resulting from JIU recommendations, and a review which the Unit had launched to make a quantitative analysis of recent results.

(c) The 1993 report 2/ discussed the establishment of a new longer-range JIU work programme structure divided into the four priority areas: administration and management; operational activities for development; peace-keeping operations and related issues; and humanitarian assistance. It also discussed the analysis of cost-savings contained in JIU reports for the 1985-1992 period; and, as requested by the General Assembly, the Unit's views and proposals for enhancing its productivity and performance.

(d) The 1994 report 4/ discussed the Unit's ongoing efforts to sharpen the focus of its current and future work programmes on priority issues identified by legislative bodies and secretariats, and the status of measures taken within the JIU to improve its working procedures and methods and enhance the quality of its reports.

85. Several years ago a practice was established that every year the JIU would indicate four of its reports issued three or four years earlier to the Secretary-General for follow-up, obtain summary comments from him concerning follow-up actions taken on its reports and recommendations, and provide brief comments thereon in its annual report.

86. The follow-up of those actions, however, remains unsatisfactory. The lack of objective criteria for selection has proved this practice to be non-operational and restrictive. It ignores the whole interplan of impacts from (a) recommendations which are quickly acted on, (b) those where major action is finally taken, but only after a decade or more, and (c) JIU reports which progressively follow up on needed corrective actions in a major management or programme area with a series of successive studies. Under these circumstances, the Unit has decided to discontinue it because all the recommendations of the JIU, as approved by the General Assembly, must be subjected to a follow-up.

87. The Unit intends to draw on the experience of the past concerning follow-up of reports. Each future JIU annual report will provide the General Assembly and all the participating organizations with a clearer, more comprehensive, coherent and up-to-date follow-up analysis of results that the Unit's reports have achieved and are achieving. The JIU will also relate action on these recent and ongoing reports to the priority directions and topics being developed for future JIU work programmes. In this way, the organizations will be in a better position to understand JIU's activities and contribute their ideas and guidance in order to keep JIU work focused on the priority concerns of Member States.

88. The Unit will seek other measures to improve the process of consideration and implementation of its individual reports by the participating organizations throughout the United Nations system. One such step is to include in the JIU

annual reports specific information on delays for submitting comments on individual JIU reports. A table on delays in preparing agency comments was most recently included in the 1991 annual report. In the future, this data will be updated in each annual report until the situation becomes satisfactory.

89. The new results and follow-up chapter being introduced in the present report will be included each year according to the major categories of JIU work. Currently, there are three such categories, as presented below.

1. Management, budgetary and administrative issues

90. During its first two decades, the work of the JIU in this area concentrated primarily on programming, budgeting and, subsequently, evaluation issues. The Unit also reviewed areas such as personnel, conference services, control of documentation, and other administrative systems and processes which Member States and the organizations identified as priority concerns.

91. The JIU concentration on programme plans, budgets and evaluation was most intense during the 1970s and early 1980s. Then, as those systems were largely established throughout the United Nations system, this work diminished. In part two of its 1991 annual report, 1/ the Unit reported in some detail on the essential completion and results of its series of more than 20 reports on evaluation methodology, establishment of internal evaluation systems, and specific evaluation of programmes undertaken during the 1976-1991 period. The Inspectors stated that while they would continue evaluation work as requested, they would in future respond more to General Assembly resolutions calling for increased in-depth reviews of management system problems. The result has been a concentration on the three following areas, with continued work in some other requested areas as well:

(a) Accountability, management improvement and oversight;

(b) Information technology;

(c) Human resources management.

(a) Accountability, management improvement and oversight

92. During the 1985-1990 period, several JIU reports began the transition to a much stronger emphasis on oversight and improvement of management and accountability in the United Nations system. In a 1985 report on the status of internal evaluation in organizations of the United Nations system (see A/41/201), the JIU recommended above all that the organizations develop an integrated and continuous system of performance information and management development to provide managers and legislative bodies with streamlined and up-to-date information on programme results. A 1989 report entitled "Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system: some comparisons" (see A/45/130) provided analysis and comprehensive tables on budgeting practices. A 1990 report entitled "Extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations: towards transparency of presentation, management and reporting" (see A/45/797) examined the need for transparency in management and reporting in this area. The Secretariat never provided comments to the General Assembly on this report, but significant reforms have nevertheless been made, as the JIU report had recommended, in the presentation of extrabudgetary resources in Programme Budget Implications (PBIs) and the creation of independent audit functions.

93. Most directly, however, the General Assembly's Fifth Committee expressed very strong dissatisfaction in 1985 with the almost total lack of information provided to it on past Secretariat performance. A 1988 JIU report entitled "Reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: monitoring, evaluation and management review components" (see A/43/124) recommended decisive action to correct the very serious inadequacies of the existing Secretariat monitoring and evaluation reports and to begin to provide regular and analytical reporting on programme results and quality to governing bodies.

94. The General Assembly agreed with the JIU, emphasizing the importance of measuring results against objectives. However, the Secretary-General reported in 1989, in essence, that existing monitoring and evaluation systems were too weak to provide adequate reporting of programme results. In 1991 the General Assembly requested the ACABQ and the CPC to reconsider the JIU report. They joined the JIU in criticizing the lack of improvement in analytical reporting and urged a "change of culture" within the Secretariat. However, a 1991 report of the Secretary-General proposed no major changes. In fact, it emphasized that reporting on programme quality would "remain outside the scope" of Secretariat monitoring of programme performance.

95. In 1992 the Secretariat finally acknowledged that evaluation was "a somewhat sickly child". The CPC also called for more analysis of implementation instead of "output-counting" monitoring reports, and for strengthened individual accountability through United Nations programmes. Those matters have subsequently been pursued with demands by the CPC and then the General Assembly in December 1993 that the Secretariat install a new system of "accountability and responsibility" by 1 January 1995, and further pursued by JIU, as discussed below.

96. A two-part JIU report on United Nations system cooperation with multilateral financial institutions 7/ concentrated on the performance and innovation challenges involved in closer operational work with those institutions. The Inspectors concluded that organizations will indeed find partners, even in the highly competitive international development area, if they have high-quality programmes and can deliver them promptly and efficiently. JIU identified ten key success factors, such as a strategic approach, identifying a "niche" of comparative advantage, and quality control. The Inspectors urged organizations to develop much more creative, responsive and performance-oriented programmes and to have much better performance reporting to their legislative bodies. The organizations' response acknowledged those points, but argued that JIU had not fully reflected their recent actions (omitting the fact that their joint comments were not issued until 16 months after the JIU report was published). In May 1993, the CPC commended the JIU report and its strong emphasis on high-quality performance to the organizations of the system.

97. Also in 1993, to respond to all the above concerns the JIU began a broad-scale review of accountability, management improvement and oversight processes throughout the United Nations system. As part of this process, the Inspectors issued an interim report on accountability and oversight in the United Nations Secretariat (see A/48/420), which identified serious weaknesses in the small internal oversight units and in other Secretariat accountability and oversight processes as well. The Inspectors recommended that a single, consolidated oversight unit be established, which the Secretary-General did in August 1993. (In 1994, this transitional unit was established by the General Assembly as a new Office of Internal Oversight Services, following most of the modalities proposed by the JIU for this new office.) In addition, the General

Assembly, in resolution 48/218, of 23 December 1993, on management improvement regretted the lack of responsiveness of the Secretary-General's report on accountability and responsibility, noted with appreciation the above JIU report, and called for the establishment of a "transparent and effective system of accountability and responsibility" in the United Nations by 1 January 1995, as recommended by the CPC.

98. The JIU issued its first comprehensive survey in 1995 in a two-part report entitled "Accountability, management improvement and oversight in the United Nations system: Part I, Overview and analysis; Part II, Comparative tables (see A/50/503 and Add.1). Part II of this report includes detailed tables summarizing the recent actions and reforms of 39 different organizations in 13 major subject areas. Part I analyses patterns, problems and developments in the following major management areas of the system:

- internal oversight units;

- management systems (internal controls and information technology);

- human resources management (management development and training, management improvement programmes);

- strategic planning and performance management: the integrated management of change;

- inter-agency activities;

- external system-wide oversight bodies; and

- oversight governing bodies: oversight activities, reporting and external review.

99. The Unit regards the report not only as a comprehensive "baseline survey" of present activities and plans of organizations throughout the system for use by secretariats and governing bodies, but also as an important input for future JIU work, as in the key areas of information technology and human resources management discussed below.

100. Finally, JIU is completing for the General Assembly's fiftieth session a report on progress in installing the new management systems in the United Nations. At the Assembly's forty-ninth session, the Secretariat provided two reports outlining planned new systems and reforms: the 1995 report will follow up on accomplishments and gaps in installing those new system components, as well as the challenges posed in determining exactly who the "United Nations managers" are, by the "downsizing" of system organizations, and by the continuing need to establish much stronger reporting to the General Assembly on programme performance and results, which JIU raised in its 1988 report and which is still very much lacking.

101. Recent related JIU reports and notes, namely, the note on transport operations of the United Nations Children's Fund (programming and management issues); 8/ the report on management of buildings in the United Nations system (see A/49/560); and the report entitled "Analysis of cost-savings from JIU reports, 1985-1992" (see A/48/606); already discussed above (para. 40) could also be regarded as important managerial tools for the secretariats concerned.

102. The JIU is currently carrying out investigations on common services of the United Nations in New York and on the management-staff union relationship in the United Nations system and has included in its work programme for 1995-1996 inspection of common services in Geneva and investigation of the efforts to streamline United Nations activities and of contracting out in the United Nations system. All these reviews should be regarded as an effort aimed at providing an integrated and coordinated follow-up in the area of administration and management.

103. The JIU included in its 1995 work programme inspection of the United Nations Access Control System (Card Access System). However, aware that the OIOS was conducting an investigation on the same subject, the Unit decided to wait for the pertinent information. The OIOS promised the Unit to put at its disposal the outcome of its investigation, but it has not yet been received.

(b) Information technology

104. A 1985 JIU report entitled "The changing use of computers in organizations of the United Nations system in Geneva: management issues" (see A/40/410) called especially on the urgent need to develop and exploit the potentials of computer systems. The JIU 1995 system-wide survey report identified information technology as a key recent development, together with human resources management, of great significance for the United Nations system. In its 1995-1996 work programme, the Unit has envisaged an investigation of the use of information technology in the United Nations system. This new broad-scale study will not only review the key elements of information technology use throughout the United Nations system but also will identify many important substantive and management aspects of the effective use of these powerful new tools and systems, discuss their potential advantages and disadvantages and propose alternatives for potential common use at system level.

105. The JIU reports entitled "Problems of storage and its costs in organizations of the United Nations system" (see A/41/806 and Corr.1 and A/42/724 and Corr.1) and, especially, "From the optical disc pilot project at the United Nations Office at Geneva to an optical disc system for the United Nations" (see A/44/684) discussed large applications and cost-savings now emerging in the system despite slow implementation. The Unit considers that the United Nations Secretariat should speed up the application of this new technological information system, thus systematically replacing other more costly services like facsimile.

106. In 1992 the JIU issued a report entitled "Towards an integrated library network of the United Nations system" (see A/47/669).

107. A 1995 report entitled "A review of telecommunications and related information technologies in the United Nations system" 9/ followed the reports of 1972 and 1982 and has been an important contribution to the current debate on this important matter. Several user agencies have praised the JIU for this report. The comments of the ACC on this report have not yet been issued.

(c) Human resources management

108. JIU work on personnel matters goes back to a 1971 report entitled "Summary of the report on personnel problems in the United Nations (professional category and above)" (A/8454). The 1995 system-wide report identifies the area of human resources management as a second key development in improving management in the United Nations system (see A/50/503 and Add.1).

109. The 1994 report entitled "Advancement of the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat in an era of 'human resources management' and 'accountability': a new beginning?" (see A/49/176) illustrated the critical importance of good human resources management. The recommendation on human resources strategy and a new planning unit has already been endorsed by the General Assembly and is being introduced, as well as a new strategy for the advancement of women. In addition, the 1995 system-wide report entitled "The advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: what happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women" (see A/50/509) contains an analysis of important new human resource issues which the organizations need to address, such as mobility, work/family, counselling and communication, sexual harassment and codes of conduct.

110. The 1994 JIU report entitled "Towards a new system of performance appraisal in the United Nations Secretariat: requirements for successful implementation" (see A/49/219) noted stronger new appraisal systems elsewhere in the United Nations system; investigated and confirmed the seriously defective United Nations system which exists; and identified key elements needed if the new performance appraisal system is to be successfully installed and in full formal use by 1997. The report also noted recurring cost-savings amounting to millions of dollars which could be obtained by not routinely awarding salary step increases each year to staff whom the new performance appraisal systems identify as sub-standard performers.

111. A JIU inspection led to the issuance in January 1995 of part I of a report entitled "Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement and promotion policies" (see A/49/845). All the recommendations were specifically endorsed by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session; although it is too early to determine specific results, it is expected that their implementation by the United Nations Secretariat will improve the situation in this important area. In its 1995 work programme, the JIU included part II (placement and promotion) of this inspection.

112. Upon a request from the UNESCO secretariat, the Unit is carrying out a closely related system-wide evaluation of comparative methods of geographical distribution of posts in the various secretariats. The Unit hopes that this review will contribute to the current debate on this matter.

113. Other reports on the rotation of staff within the United Nations (see A/46/326), on grade overlap (see A/47/140) and on advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system (see A/47/168) have proved to very useful tools for staff administration and management.

2. Operational activities for development

114. Because operational activities for development continue to claim a substantial portion of the financial and human resources of the JIU's participating organizations, the Unit has maintained and recently expanded its inspection and evaluation coverage of the economic, social and related sectors of the United Nations development system.

115. The central objective of the Unit in this major area of its work has been to assist the organizations in devising more cost-effective strategies and institutional arrangements for building the self-reliant or sustainable development capacities of the developing countries. To that end, the JIU has, since its inception, issued numerous reports and made recommendations on specific themes of development cooperation, such as rationalization and

coordination of the system's operations at country level, harmonization of programme and budget cycles and programme support procedures, common premises and services in the field, decentralization to the operational level, and government (national) execution of projects.

116. The Unit's progressive emphasis on these themes over the years has formed the core substance of legislative directives for the operational activities for development of the organizations, as illustrated more comprehensively by the General Assembly in its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and 47/199 of 22 December 1992.

117. In the past several years the Unit has intensified its inspection and evaluation of the development cooperation activities of the organizations by issuing, between 1990 and 1994, some 20 reports containing over 100 recommendations. Twelve (60 per cent) of those reports were of system-wide scope or of direct concern to all the participating organizations of the Unit, while eight were of specific interest to individual organizations of the system. Because of the lack of systematic reporting on follow-up actions on JIU reports and recommendations, the Unit has still to develop a comprehensive picture of the aggregate results and impact of its more recent work in development cooperation.

118. None the less, most of the reports issued by the Unit since 1990 have generally received favourable reviews by legislative bodies of the system. A number of reports either contributed directly to enhance operational efficiency and cost-savings in programme operations or identified areas where improved redesign of policies and systems could sharpen the effectiveness of technical cooperation programmes.

119. Examples of such reports include the 1991 JIU note on transport operations of the United Nations Children's Fund, 8/ which enabled UNICEF to achieve recurrent annual cost-savings in the order of US$ 15 million; a report entitled "A forward-looking assessment of the technical cooperation programme of the International Civil Aviation Organization, 10/ which made a significant contribution to the reorganization and strengthening of ICAO's technical cooperation programme; or the two-part report on decentralization of organizations within the United Nations system (see A/48/78) which, inter alia, has contributed to concrete actions in some specialized agencies, especially FAO, IMO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO and UPU; those agencies have reorganized or reinforced their field presence in accordance with the report's main recommendations.

120. Increased institutional collaboration among partners in development cooperation in their support of the developing countries has been another major theme of the Unit's reports since 1990. Foremost in this vein was the two-part report on United Nations system cooperation with multilateral financial institutions, 7/ which urged the organizations of the system to foster creativity, competitiveness, programme responsiveness and sustained performance improvement to enable them to collaborate more effectively with the multilateral financial institutions. The ILO is cited in the report for its cooperation with the multilateral financial institutions. Recent trends in the development of cooperative relationships between these two groups of development partners, especially in the field, are in line with the main recommendations of the report.

121. Similarly, the report entitled "Working with non-governmental organizations: operational activities for development of the United Nations

system with non-governmental organizations and Governments at the grass-roots and national levels" (see A/49/122-E/1994/44) has contributed to heightened awareness within the United Nations system of the potential benefits for the developing countries of expanded collaboration between the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations at the grass-roots and national levels in order to enable the organizations to reach out more directly to the millions of rural people who have been largely left behind by existing development programmes supported by the system.

122. Recent JIU reports have equally emphasized the efficiency and cost-savings benefits of more streamlined and cohesive institutional arrangements at the country level, especially through a more unitary approach to field representation of United Nations system organizations (see A/49/133-E/1994/49) or through the implementation of a world-wide programme of United Nations system common premises and services in the field (see A/49/629), the aggregate cost-savings of which could be substantial.

123. The Unit decided to undertake a three-part review to assess United Nations system-wide cooperation in science and technology for development in the developing countries. The Unit has completed its reviews regarding Asia and Africa and intends to initiate the review concerning Latin America and the Caribbean region. At its 1995 substantive session, the Economic and Social Council praised the report regarding Africa (see A/50/125-E/1995/19) and took note of it.

3. Peace-keeping activities and humanitarian assistance

124. The report on the coordination of activities related to early warning of possible refugee flows (see A/45/649 and Corr.1) was the first issued by JIU in this area. One of the main conclusions of the report was the necessity of introducing early warning as a regular component of work in the United Nations in a coordinated manner, by making use of existing structures and designating a control focal point within the United Nations system for monitoring factors related to refugee flows and by establishing an inter-agency consultative mechanism. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/127 of 17 December 1991, endorsed the relevant JIU recommendations. Within the framework of implementation, a post of emergency relief coordinator was created and an inter-agency working group on early warning of refugees and displaced persons was set up.

125. In the note entitled "Some proposals for improving the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations", 11/ JIU, in a selective analysis, addressed certain managerial and financial problems, as well as those related to the contribution of troops. As a result, the Unit made a number of proposals to the Secretary-General for improvement in each of those areas. Financial issues related to peace-keeping operations were further pursued in the "Note on an Agenda for Peace: some reflections on chapter XI - financing". 12/

126. The report on staffing of the United Nations peace-keeping and related missions (civilian component) (see A/48/421) analysed the functioning of the different departments and units of the United Nations Secretariat in managing peace-keeping operations and the extent of interdepartmental coordination and cooperation and organizational structures and functions, both at Headquarters and in the field, with a view to having more coherent and consolidated management, avoiding duplication, enhancing coordination and sharpening the process of early warning, planning, deployment, and monitoring and evaluation. It also looked into measures recommended and/or adopted by the Secretariat to

improve its management. The report was favourably commented upon by the Secretary-General (see A/48/421/Add.1). Some of its recommendations have already been implemented. The report was also considered in the Fifth and Special Political Committees at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and was referred to in resolution 48/42, adopted by the Assembly on 10 December 1993. Following an in-depth discussion of the report, the CPC expressed appreciation for its timeliness and agreement with the diagnosis of the imperfections in the civilian component of the staffing of United Nations peace-keeping and related missions. The CPC also expressed satisfaction that some of the recommendations made by the Inspectors in the report had already been implemented.

127. Concerned with the increasing United Nations burden in peace-keeping operations, JIU produced a report on sharing responsibilities in peace-keeping: the United Nations and regional organizations (see A/50/571). The report put forward findings and recommendations on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security. Its objective is to contribute to the current efforts to increase the involvement of regional organizations in collective security, in the hope that this would ease the burden on the United Nations.

128. A report entitled "Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations" (see A/50/572) focuses primarily on how to improve and make effective the mechanisms for cooperation and coordination both at Headquarters and field levels among the different actors in complex emergencies. It explores the possibility and feasibility of reviewing and formulating rules of conduct (guidelines) of agencies participating in complex situations, bearing in mind their competence, priorities, the new demands on peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance, with full respect for the principles of independence, neutrality, humanity and impartiality in international and internal conflicts. Some emblematic cases of complex operations are examined to draw lessons from both past successes and negative experiences. The protection and security of United Nations personnel are also addressed.

129. The concerns and interests expressed by Member States are being followed by JIU in the following ongoing studies:

(a) A report on the involvement of the United Nations system in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance aims (i) to look at the progress and problems of United Nations coordination mechanisms for humanitarian assistance, its overall stand-by capacity, operational and organizational mechanisms, and its planning and preparedness techniques in handling complex emergencies; and (ii) to shed light on the major areas in which humanitarian operations can be further improved. The recommendations include action to further shift from the fragmented approach to emergency response and consolidate comprehensive frameworks for operations in the field, with lateral cooperation at Headquarters, in the field and between the two.

(b) The Unit is also conducting a review on strengthening the United Nations system capacity for conflict prevention. The report aims (i) to review the past and current activities and capacities of the United Nations system in dealing with conflicts and (ii) to highlight the importance of conflict prevention on the basis of a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention which would include addressing root causes of conflicts, upgrading the United Nations capacity in preventive diplomacy as well as active involvement of all actors. The recommendations contain concrete proposals for action to be taken by Member

States and the Secretary-General and at the inter-agency level in order to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system for conflict prevention.

(c) The report on the military component of United Nations peace-keeping operations complements and builds upon the previous JIU study on the civilian component. Through examination of a number of issues, the Inspectors hope to contribute to current efforts to improve the capability of the United Nations in planning and managing the military component of peace operations. Thus, the Inspectors examine and deal with three broad issues. The first is the managerial aspects of mandates for peace-keeping, emphasizing the importance of consultations among members of the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat, as well as the importance of unity of command and control. The second is the availability of troops and equipment and their readiness and timely deployment. Within this context, some of the ongoing efforts to improve the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations are discussed, namely: rapid-reaction force, stand-by arrangements, rapid-reaction capability and other related issues such as rotation of troops, safety and security of personnel, death and disability benefits and reimbursements for equipment. The third issue is the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat to manage peace-keeping operations. It deals with the functioning and recent restructuring of different departments, especially the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, concentrating on elements such as planning, legal arrangements, training, information and logistic support services. The importance of communication and coordination within Headquarters and the field and between them is also discussed. The recommendations follow up on these issues in detail.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/46/34).

2/ Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/48/34).

3/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/50/7), part IX.B.

4/ Ibid., Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/49/34).

5/ Ibid., Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/39/38), para. 387.

6/ Ibid., Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/47/34).

7/ E/1993/18 and Add.1.

8/ JIU/NOTE/91/1.

9/ JIU/REP/95/3.

10/ JIU/REP/92/3.

11/ JIU/NOTE/92/1.

12/ JIU/NOTE/93/1.

ANNEX I

List of reports before the General Assembly and legislative bodies of participating organizations

A/49/423	Review and assessment of efforts to restructure the regional dimension of United Nations economic and social activities
A/49/564	Staff turnover and delays in recruitment (the lapse factor)
A/49/629	United Nations system common premises and services in the field
A/50/113 and Add.1	National execution of projects
A/50/125-E/1995/19	United Nations system support for science and technology in Africa
A/50/126	Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system
A/50/503 and Add.1	Accountability, management improvement, and oversight in the United Nations system, parts I and II
A/50/507	Management in the United Nations: work in progress
A/50/509	The advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: what happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women?
A/50/571	Report on sharing responsibilities in peace-keeping: the United Nations and regional organizations
A/50/572	Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations
E/1993/119	Relationship agreements between the United Nations and the specialized agencies: review and strengthening of sections pertaining to the common system of salaries, allowances and conditions of service
JIU/REP/95/3	A review of telecommunications and related information technologies in the United Nations system
JIU/REP/95/7	United Nations system support for science and technology in Asia and the Pacific

Ongoing studies

Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings

Evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Military component of United Nations peace-keeping operations

Strengthening the United Nations system capacity for conflict prevention

Involvement of the United Nations system in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance

ANNEX II

1995 Work programme

A. Management, budgetary and administrative issues

1. An investigation into the management-Staff Union relationship in the United Nations system

2. Advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: what happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women

3. Management in the United Nations Secretariat

4. Common services of United Nations organizations in New York

5. A system-wide comparative review of methods of geographical distribution

6. Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings

7. United Nations access control system (card access system)

8. Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement and promotion policies: part II - placement and promotion

B. Operational activities for development

1. United Nations system development cooperation in science and technology: Latin America and the Caribbean

2. Evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

C. Peace-keeping and related operations

1. Military component of United Nations peace operations

2. Strengthening the United Nations system's capacity for conflict prevention

D. Humanitarian assistance

1. Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations

2. Involvement of the United Nations system in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance

Preliminary work programme for 1996 and beyond

A. Management, budgetary and administrative issues

1. Common services in Geneva: part II (initiated internally)

2. Use of information technology in the United Nations system (initiated internally)

3. Inspection of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (initiated internally)

4. System-wide review of ways to improve programming methodology: system-wide review of planning, programming and budgeting procedures (suggested by ESCWA)

5. Review of procurement policies and procedures (suggested by FAO)

6. A review of printing arrangements within the United Nations system (suggested by FAO)

7. Costs involved for the system as a whole in preparing and disseminating the larger number of reports and studies mandated by General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions (suggested by the World Food Programme)

8. Cost/benefit analysis of the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat and related efforts to streamline United Nations activities (suggested by OIOS)

9. Investigation of the Centre for Human Rights (suggested by OIOS)

10. Construction of a United Nations Conference Centre at Addis Ababa for the Economic Commission for Africa and at Bangkok for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (suggested by the Office of Conference and Support Services of the United Nations Secretariat)

11. Subcontracting in the United Nations system (initiated internally)

12. An analysis of the number, size and cost of conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings and gatherings in the technical cooperation programmes of the United Nations system (suggested by UNDP)

B. Development and cooperation

1. Relationship between the funding agencies of the United Nations system and the United Nations Secretariat, particularly regional commissions and the United Nations Population Fund (suggested by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)

2. Cooperation between Global Environment Facility implementing agencies and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system (suggested by FAO)

3. Financial and administrative applications of a meaningful UNDP presence and activities in the net contributor countries (suggested by UNDP)

4. Strengthening field representation and operations in the context of decentralization of organizations within the United Nations system (follow-up Note) (suggested by UNIDO)

C. Peace-keeping and related operations

1. Problems of the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations (upon specific request from the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session)

2. Coordination at Headquarters and field level, within the framework of "An Agenda for Peace", between the United Nations agencies in peace-building: an assessment of the possibilities (suggested by UNESCO)

3. Peace-keeping operations office and living-quarters camps; budgeting, procurement, management and removal from one mission and reinstallation in another mission (initiated internally)

D. Humanitarian affairs and related operations

1. An assessment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and other bodies concerned on their humanitarian activities (initiated internally)